

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Action/Discussion Item:

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) FY08 Unmet Need for LEAs

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 156.670

KRS 156.690

KRS 157.655

KRS 157.660

Action Question:

Should the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approve the FY08 unmet education technology need for school districts?

History/Background:

Existing Policy. According to KRS 157.660, the School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) can provide a Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) Offer of Assistance to a school district only after the State Board approves the district's unmet need. Therefore, each fiscal year the KBE approves each district's technology unmet need.

The Master Plan for Education Technology, which was originally approved in 1992, describes in detail the process for determining KETS Offers of Assistance, the school planning process, the state review and assistance calculation methods, and examples of how data extracted from the plans relates to funds allocated to schools. The annual FY08 unmet need for each district is determined by what it takes to minimally operate, maintain, and incrementally upgrade existing investments while also acquiring new and emerging technology. The FY08 unmet need is \$132M (i.e., approximately \$227 per student). This \$132M figure comes from the 2007-2012 KETS Master Plan that the KBE approved in February 2007. The KETS 2000-2006 Master Plan was underfunded by approximately \$300M, so districts will also be addressing that previous unmet need at the same time as well with a variety of funding sources.

In addition, districts may pursue education initiatives that foster better levels of education technology service delivery than the minimum goals described in the Master Plan (e.g., lower workstation ratios and wireless connectivity for high schools to improve ease of access to electronic instructional content for all students, electronic projectors and interactive student devices in all classrooms for formative testing). These are considered optional versus required approaches in the KETS Master Plan that districts have the choice to implement. Optional items are not included in the \$132M annual unmet need calculation; however, we do track how much money is spent on these discretionary line items each year through the MUNIS technology spending reports and the technology readiness survey.

KETS offers of assistance only represent part of the funding strategy needed to support each district's technology services. In the 2007-2012 KETS Master Plan and the FY2008 KETS expenditure plan we identify a variety of federal, state, local and private funds that can be used to pay for a district's unmet need.

The request is that the KBE approve the unmet need. In the FY08 KETS Expenditure Plan, the Board will be made aware of a variety of FY08 funds that are available to go toward that FY08 unmet need. Districts will need to continue to secure alternative funding sources beyond the KETS funds, (e.g., federal funds, local grants, corporate donations, etc.) to fully fund the unmet need.

The four basic categories of unmet need are operations, maintenance, incremental replacement and new technologies. Of the four categories, expenditures in Operations and Maintenance are necessary to sustain current levels of service. That is, if unmet need within the Operations and Maintenance categories is not addressed in accordance with program guidelines, the integrity, sufficiency, and capacity of the district technology infrastructure will degrade until services are seriously curtailed or eliminated. These include items like student and teacher workstation repair, instructional software/services improvements, classroom printer repair, instructional fileserver repair, school and district management software improvements, initial/ongoing technology integration professional development, student technology leadership services, Internet instructional content, telephone communications to parents, distance learning service, help desk services, e-mail services, and enterprise data system access.

The unmet need for Incremental Replacement constitutes a framework for replacement of various technology components on a scheduled basis over time, in accordance with the life cycle of each item or service. These include items like student workstations, teacher workstations, instructional fileservers, assistive and adaptive technology, school laser printers, classroom color printers, wireless networks, student hand-held devices, high-speed fiber networks, desktop conferencing, and digital projection devices.

The following must occur before a district receives its funding: (1) State Board approves unmet need for each district, (2) School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) approves unmet need, (3) The district successfully meets all of the statutory requirements of KRS 157.655 and KRS 157.660, (4) the district verifies its final ADA count to KDE, and (5) KDE calculates Offers of Assistance based on these variables. The districts must follow requirements of the SFCC by receiving approved board action and proof of deposit of funds into a local interest bearing technology account. The SFCC will then wire funds to the district's technology account.

Staff Recommendation and Rationale:

Staff recommends approval of the unmet need funding. Staff certifies that the districts recommended by the Commissioner have met all the statutory requirements of KRS 157.655 and KRS 157.660 and will be required to adequately describe their unmet need and current KETS inventory before FY 08 Offers of Assistance are distributed.

Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:

- Commissioner's Technology Advisory Council

- Kentucky Society of Technology in Education
- KDE Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, and Associate Commissioners
- Student Technology Leadership Program including teachers, parents, and students
- Every district's education technology leadership (e.g., Chief Information Officers, District Technology Coordinators, Chief Education Technology Officer) staff
- Assessment Interest Group
- Administration and Finance Interest Group
- Communications Interest Group
- Teaching and Learning Interest Group
- Education Technology Vendors
- Former students, Connect Kentucky, and College Admissions Office staff

These groups/persons are in support of the approval of the FY08 Unmet Need.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Approval of the unmet need amounts for local school districts is the first step required to allow local school districts to receive state funding to assist them in purchasing hardware, software, personnel, professional development and other technology initiatives that will support students in achieving academic excellence and reaching proficiency by 2014.

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